

# THE MEDICAL NEWS AND LIBRARY.

VOL. I.

DECEMBER, 1843.

No. 12.

## CONTENTS.

<b>CLINICS.</b>	
<i>Wills Hospital.</i> —Admissions, discharges, and operations during the month of October, . . .	121
<i>Pennsylvania Hospital.</i> —Cases admitted during the month of November, 1843, . . .	121
<b>SKETCHES AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF MEDICAL DELUSIONS.</b>	
A New Humbug, Naptha, . . . . .	122
Quackery of the Day.—Second Letter from Timothy Gosling, . . . . .	124
<b>MEDICAL NEWS.</b>	
<i>Domestic Intelligence.</i> —Medical Society of Delaware, . . . . .	126
Stearine, . . . . .	127
Philadelphia Medical Classes, . . . . .	127
Medical College of Ohio, . . . . .	127
Harvard University, Boston, . . . . .	127
Willoughby University of Lake Erie, . . . . .	127
Cleveland Medical College, . . . . .	127
Cortland Medical and Surgical Association, . . . . .	127
University of Maryland, . . . . .	127
<i>Foreign Intelligence.</i> —Action of Gastric Juice on 'alculi, . . . . .	128
Extirpation of Ovaria, . . . . .	128
Association of Medical Officers of Hospitals for the Insane, . . . . .	128
Strangulation by the Umbilical Cord, . . . . .	128
Modification of the Hydrostatic Bed, . . . . .	128
College of Surgeons, . . . . .	129
Fracture simultaneous with Cancer, . . . . .	129
Intermittent Hæmorrhage, . . . . .	129
Longevity in Russia, . . . . .	129
Sir Charles Bell, . . . . .	129
Caries of the Acromion Process, . . . . .	129
Insane Poor in Ireland, . . . . .	129
Moxson's Magnesians Aperient, . . . . .	129
Electrical Apparatus for Medical purposes, . . . . .	129
INDEX, . . . . .	130
WATSON'S LECTURES, . . . . .	24 pages.

## CLINICS.

### WILLS HOSPITAL.

Service of Dr. HAYS.

Patients in the house on the first of October, . . . . . 27  
Admitted during the month, . . . . . 6  
Discharged, . . . . . 9  
Remaining in the house, . . . . . 24  
Males, . . . . . 15  
Females, . . . . . 9  
Operations during the month:  
For cataract, . . . . . 2  
" artificial pupil, . . . . . 3  
" pteryguim, . . . . . 1  
" removal of piece of iron from posterior chamber of the eye, . . . . . 1  
— . . . . . 7

JNO. CURWEN, Resident.

## PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL.

Service of Dr. Woon.

Cases admitted into the Medical Wards of Pennsylvania Hospital during the month of November:

Ascites, 1; diarrhœa, chronic, 1; drunkenness, 2; enlargement of spleen, 1; epilepsy, 2; erysipelas, 1; fever, remittent, 1; do. intermittent, 1; do. typhoid, 2; hæmoptysis, 1; hæmiplegia, 1; hysteria, 1; inflammation of brain, 1; mania-a-potu, 1; neuralgia, 1; pneumonia, 3; phthisis, 1; rheumatism, chronic, 5; spinal irritation, 1.—Total, 28.  
Cases discharged:  
Anæmia, 1; bronchitis, 2; drunkenness, 2; erysipelas, 1; fever, remittent, 5; do. intermittent, 4; do. typhoid, 3; functional affection of heart, 1; hemicrania, 1; hemiplegia, 1; hæmoptysis, 1; inflammation of brain, 1; mania-a-potu, 1; phthisis, 3; pleu-

⚡ Attention is particularly requested to the *terms of subscription*, for which see advertisement on the last page of this No. This work for 1844, will in no case be sent unless payment is made *in advance*.

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VOL. I.—12

risy, 1; pneumonia, 1; paralysis of arm, 1; do. agitans, 1; polypus of uterus, 1; prolapsus of do., 2; rheumatism, acute, 1; do. chronic, 1; tonsillitis, 1; chronic enteritis, 1. —Total, 39. Died, 5.

F. W. SARGENT, M. D.,  
Resident Physician.

November 29, 1843.

### SKETCHES AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF MEDICAL DELUSIONS.

*A New Humbug.—Naphtha a Cure for Consumption.*—A Dr. John Hastings,\* in a work recently published, extols naphtha as almost a specific in pulmonary consumption, and details thirty-seven cases, all of which are regarded by him as examples of genuine phthisis; and all, or nearly all, of which were, he asserts, cured by naphtha!

This work of Dr. Hastings not having yet reached us, we shall give some extracts from a review of it, in the *British and Foreign Medical Review*; which will enable the profession here to judge what claims this professed cure for consumption has to their confidence. We are a very gullible people; and this new specific will doubtless be seized upon by those *enterprising* young men in the profession who seize upon every bubble, and try to float aloft with them to attract the gaze of the simple. The bubble they know will soon burst, but their object—*notoriety*—will be gained.

"The work of Dr. John Hastings," says the reviewer, "although professedly written to magnify the virtues of naphtha in consumption, contains, of course, all the usual display of materials which the public could desiderate in a treatise on so popular a malady; accordingly, we have separate chapters on the causes, symptoms, complication, pathology, diagnosis, and treatment of consumption. Of these we shall only say, in the mass, that with the exception of a single observation of a few words on the subject of 'a globule' in tubercle 'hitherto unnoticed,' (p. 35,) and which observation is obviously, like the rest of the book, a mistake—they do not contain one particle of information which is not to be found in the works in everybody's hands, while they are disfigured by

\* This Dr. John Hastings must not be confounded with Dr. Charles Hastings, of Worcester, who is one of the most honourable and able physicians in England.

innumerable omissions, oversights and mistakes, and exhibit a style of composition discreditable to any man who has received even an ordinary English education, and disgraceful to one who boasts the highest honours of our learned profession."

"The quality of its materials, its tone and manner, its 'taking title,' and the way in which it has been blazoned in the newspapers, to an extent far beyond the ordinary range of honest medical advertisement for the mere sale of books—all too forcibly remind them of the publication of works, the subsequent conduct of whose authors left no room for indulging the charitable belief that their productions were merely the offspring of ignorance and folly. The speedy lapse of these men into the practice of open and unblushing quackery, made it evident that they had calculated beforehand the effect that would be made on the public mind by their bold announcement—that a most destructive malady, usually deemed irremediable, was really 'curable;' and not only so, but that it had been 'successfully treated' by themselves. Wherefore it is that honourable men doubt of Dr. John Hastings, and that we deem it our duty to point out, at least, the danger that he runs."

"The original part of this volume consists in the details of thirty-seven cases of pectoral affections, all regarded by the author as examples of genuine phthisis, all treated by naphtha, and *all*, or nearly all, *CURED* by it, in a space of time varying (to speak in round numbers) from one month to four months!

"'From the very *first moment*,' [how marvellously rapid is the operation of this agent, and how quick the perceptions of the author!] 'from the very first moment I employed naphtha in pulmonary consumption up to the present time, it has been so successful in my hands, that I have no doubt it will be found, upon careful and judicious use, to be *little less than a specific* in the earlier stages of the disease.' (P. 8.)

"'Single-handed, if I may be allowed the use of the expression, *it has cured pulmonary consumption in almost every case in which it has hitherto been used*, when the disease has been treated in an early stage. And from what I have more recently observed, although I do not consider myself justified at present to publish it, [what?] I am most sanguine that, *even in the latter stages of the disease, a restoration of health may generally be calculated upon.*' (P. 120.)

"Such general statements as these, however remarkable, coming from a quarter hitherto unknown, and consequently of no authority, would make but little impression on the minds of those who know phthisis by long and melancholy experience, or who have overlived the kindred marvels once worked in utopian medicine by digitalis, hydrocyanic acid, &c. &c. Unsupported by facts, or alleged facts, they would be utterly disregarded by men of experience, as merely yet another brood of those vain visions which, in all times, have beset the brains of incipient doctors. But when we have these statements ostensibly *borne out* by the details of the cases of thirty-seven men and women, with their names and addresses blazoned in a book,—men and women, too, all alive and well, with lungs now as sound and sonorous as a bell, although, but a few weeks or months ago, with chests as dull as a board from tubercles,—the thing becomes of much more serious import, and demands close investigation.

"What, then, are the 'facts' which Dr. John Hastings has recorded in his book—and with which, if all the men and women of England are not soon made acquainted, it is assuredly their own fault, for shutting their eyes to the gentle intimations given of its existence, and the nature of its cheering contents, in every journal of the day? The 'facts' are these:

"Thirty-two women and four men\* came to Dr. John Hastings, labouring under pectoral affections of various duration, from a few weeks to some years, and presenting, with scarcely an exception, and with remarkable uniformity, the following very serious combination of *symptoms*: cough, dyspnoea, copious expectoration, profuse night sweats, emaciation. Four had had hæmoptysis. The nature of the expectoration is scarcely ever mentioned, and the state of the pulse only three or four times. A large proportion of the patients are stated to be of consumptive families. *Every one* of these patients, in addition to these symptoms, afforded to Dr. John Hastings auscultatory signs of the most formidable import, viz., *dulness over a part or the whole upper regions of the chest*, absence of the respiratory murmur in the dull spaces, or change of its natural character to that of feeble, harsh, &c. &c. In no less a number, we think,

\* We exclude, for the present, Case Twenty-three, that of a patient in the last stage.

than twenty-seven out of the thirty-seven cases, the dulness is represented as existing not only *on both sides, but over the upper portion of the chest generally*; in ten cases, or thereabouts, the dulness is confined to one side. In about one half of the cases, the sounds of the heart are stated to be abnormally audible over the dull parts; and the respiration is recorded as *puerile* on the sound side in almost all the cases where the dulness existed only on one side. Supra-clavicular or sub-clavicular depressions are stated to exist in several cases.

"It is evident that if we admit the validity of the evidence of disease here afforded to us, and implied by these symptoms and physical signs, we must concur in opinion with Dr. John Hastings, that he had to deal with serious structural disease of the lungs; in short, with pulmonary consumption in an advanced stage of its progress. And yet what is the result of his treatment of these very cases?

"Under the use of naphtha (in doses varying from ten to twenty, thirty, or forty drops, thrice a day,) and of naphtha alone, (for in general no other means seem to have been used,) *ALL are cured*; the cough, expectoration, sweats, &c., disappearing for the most part within a few weeks, and the physical signs, indicating structural change, vanishing shortly after!!"

The reviewer gives an analysis of the cases, to show the precise period within which a complete cure was effected, according to Dr. John Hastings, and quotes three of the cases verbatim. He then asks:—

"Now is not this—and all this—most wonderful? Are not the results here blazoned almost unexampled in the annals of medicine, even when we include therein those copious but degrading and disgraceful chronicles of which our newspapers are the vehicles, and of which the vendors of secret pills and balsams and other *universal* remedies, are the authors? We think they are. Other wonder-workers in the therapeutics of desperate maladies have for the most part toiled in the dark. In regard to the dreadful diseases they boasted to cure, honest men had the consolation to think, amid their own failures, that the diseases either did not exist at all, or that the so-called cures were merely temporary alleviations, to which almost all diseases are naturally subject. No evidence but the assertions of the parties was adduced; and, of course, these went for no-



thing among men of sense and honour. But the deeds of Dr. John Hastings are of quite another stamp. Wisely judging, no doubt, that the mere assertion of a doctor of medicine, even although that doctor should be the senior physician of a free dispensary, would, on such a subject, go for little, even among the well-informed men out of the profession,—now, when the knowledge of auscultation has become so general,—he has called to his aid *the positive evidence of physical signs*, leaving no loophole whereby the most skeptical (admitting the truth of the statements) can escape from the conviction that he has actually cured, in succession,\* at least six-and-thirty cases of confirmed phthisis pulmonalis, (and God knows how many more,) with consolidation of the whole or greater portion of the upper lobes, in one, two, or three months,—and all by some ten or twenty drops of naphtha, taken thrice daily, in a little water!! This is a feat assuredly ‘beyond all Greek, beyond all Roman fame;’ beyond all that has been claimed for their panaceas by the quacks of past or present times; beyond all that has been observed by faithful and experienced physicians since the days of Hippocrates; beyond all that the most enthusiastic believers in the remedial powers of art have ever ventured to expect; beyond all that the fondest lovers of their kind have dared to hope or almost to pray for!

“And can we, then, sitting here as capable, honest and unprejudiced judges, lay this precious and flattering unction to our souls, and believe that all this has verily been done; and that we may now, in consequence, confidently expect, with Dr. John Hastings, to cure, by means of this glorious naphtha, every case, or almost every case, of pulmo-

\* “Of the thirty-seven cases, all, except four, occurred during the first six months of the present year—viz four in January, four in February, six in March, eight in April, seven in May, and four in June. We should like to know if any other physician to a general dispensary, or even to a dispensary devoted exclusively to pectoral complaints, ever before met with so many cases of *chests dull all over the upper regions*, in the earlier stages of phthisis, in so short a period? We wish Dr. Roe or Dr. Walshe would inform us how many cases of this kind they have seen during the present year, at the Hospital for Consumption. We wish still more earnestly that they and their colleague Dr. Williams would invite Dr. John Hastings to exhibit the Herculean heroism of his naphtha before them at the hospital. We dare say they could find, at least, a few specimens of disease for him, answering—or almost answering—to his stereotyped nosological formula:—‘All the superior regions of the chest yielded a dull sound on percussion; the respiratory murmur was scarcely audible, or was feeble and harsh, &c.’”

nary consumption, and thus, for the future, save from a premature death one-fifth of the human race? Would that it were so; but, alas, alas, it is not so! All our knowledge of health and disease, all our experience of medical treatment, all our reasoning on the facts of science, all our reflection on the fallaciousness of human testimony, on the imperfection of medical observation, on the sins of partiality and prejudice that so easily beset us, and on the seductions of vanity and self-interest, would lead us, *a priori*, to doubt or disbelieve such a proposition, if stated to us in general terms; and the careful perusal of the work before us has left on our minds the painful certainty that, in the individual case of Dr. John Hastings, we must utterly deny its truth!”

—  
*Quackery of the Day.—Second Letter from Timothy Gosling.*—Sir: I lose no time in informing you that I have had a most interesting interview with M. Reynard, who arrived in London yesterday, and was so kind as to give me an early audience. The interview was indeed highly gratifying to me, as it enabled me fully to comprehend the merits of Professor Phillpockett’s system, and completely removed from my mind any little remains of skepticism which might still remain there. It was truly delightful to find, that the Professor’s theory is extremely simple, and is based upon facts, which are universally recognized by all who are acquainted with the brilliant discoveries of the eminent continental anatomists and physiologists. The brain has been demonstrated by them to be composed of alternate strata, which are precisely analogous, or rather identical, with the plates which compose the voltaic battery, the nerves being, of course, the conductors by which the electric circuit is formed. Now the grand discovery of the Professor is the mode by which this cerebral battery is to be exerted, and how, at the pleasure of the operator, the positive and negative, or, to speak more correctly, the polarized and the depolarized states, may be produced and transmitted to the various organs separately and individually. The Professor did me the honour to explain to me the whole affair, and exhibited to me his apparatus, which is equally remarkable for its simplicity and for its powerful effect. But it was with a strict injunction of secrecy; and this was done, not from the sordid wish to monopolize any pecuniary benefit which

may be derived from the discovery, but because he has ample proof that it would be extremely dangerous to trust the process in any hands but those who are thoroughly skilled in the management of the apparatus. He related a case, in confirmation of this position, which occurred in the city only two days ago. A man of the name of Jeremiah Bouby, a weaver in Spitalfields, who had, for many years, maintained his family very comfortably by his earnings, was, unfortunately, induced to attend a meeting of the anti-corn-law league, and learning from one of the orators that his wages were too low, he refused to work until they should be raised. This, however, his master refused to do; and poor Jerry and his family were all starving for want of food, when an ignorant quack in his neighbourhood, who had, by some chance, got possession of the apparatus, but not knowing how to use it, applied it in the wrong direction, and, of course, produced the directly contrary effect to what was intended. Jerry's stomach was highly polarized, and thrown into a state of the most acute excitement, so that a degree of bulimia was necessarily induced of such extreme violence, that it was with the utmost difficulty, and only by the assistance of a policeman, who luckily was in the neighbourhood, that he was prevented from seizing one of his children and cutting him up into chops. He remained for some hours in this horrible state, when it was found absolutely necessary to convey him to a lunatic asylum, when I was informed it was proposed, as a means of at least temporary relief, to put him on the hydropathic plan, taking the precaution of having the abdomen well secured by strong bandages. M. Reynard informed me that two cases, very similar to that of Jerry's, occurred at Puffinburg, where the Professor made known his discovery; so that he considers himself bound, by every motive of honour and philanthropy, to prevent his apparatus from being employed, except under his own immediate inspection, or by those who have been instructed by himself. The sole management of the process in this country is, of course, entrusted to M. Reynard, and the office of introducing the patients to M. Reynard is, for the present, conferred on myself. It has frequently been observed in the progress of science, that grand discoveries are contemporary; and so it has

proved in the present instance. While Phillpockett was thus acquiring this wonderful power over the action of the stomach, Dr Focks, Professor of Chemistry in the same University, has been applying his extraordinary talents to the analysis of some of the principal articles of food, and has been eminently successful in his results. He has already discovered the distinct existence of panine, the specific principle of bread, that in which its nutritive power resides, and which he finds, as might have been anticipated, to constitute only a small proportion of the whole mass: he has not yet quite ascertained the precise ratio, but he has found it to be not more than 49 parts in 1000. He has also discovered vitaline and agnine, the specific principles of veal and lamb respectively, and he has made progress in the analysis of beef and mutton; but, in consequence of the more powerful attraction between their atoms, he has not yet been able to obtain bovine and ovine in their perfectly pure state.

Your intelligent readers will readily perceive the immense benefits that must be conferred on society by these grand discoveries, and the farther discoveries to which they cannot but lead. And I may here intimate to you, that the Professor has lately entered upon a train of experiments, still more curious and important than those on the stomach, in which, by the application of a modified apparatus to a certain organ of the body, he feels confident that he shall be able to produce an effectual remedy for the evils so strongly painted by Malthus and McCulloch, and which have hitherto entirely baffled all our most eminent moralists and political economists. The most fruitful source of vice and misery will now be effectually nipped in the bud; but of this, more hereafter.

I must now close this perhaps too long letter, by informing you that I have engaged spacious apartments, for the reception of those ladies and gentlemen who are desirous of seeing M. Reynard, at No. 1 Folly Lane; a situation which I have chosen as being more central than my former residence, and also, as being in the neighbourhood of some of the most distinguished inns of court.

I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

TIMOTHY GOSLING.

N. B. The usual fee will be expected.

[*London Med. Gaz.*, March, 1843.]



## MEDICAL NEWS.

## DOMESTIC INTELLIGENCE.

*Medical Society of Delaware.*—This society has published an excellent report, assigning reasons why it should surrender its charter to the General Assembly.

The society by its charter has the power of interdicting the practice of medicine within the State, to incompetent persons, by imposing a penalty of fifty dollars upon any one practising without the license of the society.

"The object of the General Assembly," says the report, "in conferring this power on the Medical Society, as appears from the preamble of the act of 1819, was, not to promote the interests of the medical profession, but, avowedly, to protect the people of the State from the evils of empiricism; an object which could in no way be better effected than by compelling persons desirous of practising medicine, to submit their pretensions and approve their qualifications before a board of professional examiners best fitted to decide upon them.

"With the power thus conferred upon it, the Medical Society assumed a very great responsibility, becoming, at least in the moral view, answerable for any evils of ignorance and incompetency which might occur in the medical practice of the State."

In 1835, the Assembly passed a singular supplementary act, making it lawful for any person to practise medicine without a license, and to receive "any fee or reward therefor, which might be voluntarily, freely, and gratuitously tendered or given" to him; but, at the same time, "providing that no such person should have the right to demand or sue for pay."

In 1839, the Assembly repealed the law prohibiting persons practising medicine for pay without license, so far as related to "persons practising on the *Thomsonian* or *Botanical system*, exclusively;" and such persons are by special provision in the act, authorized "to sue for and recover fees." By a farther act, entitled "*An act for the relief of Homœopathic Physicians*," passed January 27, 1843, the same exemption from taking out a license, and the same authority to sue for and recover fees, are accorded to "practitioners on the Homœopathic system exclusively."

"By these two acts," (we quote the report) "it is undeniable that the General Assembly of Delaware have revoked, in every essential feature, the power of the Medical Society to protect the people of the State from the evils of empiricism. It continues the censorship; but it excludes from censure two classes by far the most numerous of empirical practitioners in the United States; and while, by these special acts of partiality, it elevates the two classes into a particular dignity, because into an exemption from laws which apply to regular physicians, and to all the petty classes of empirics who have not yet found favour with the General Assembly, it leaves the Medical Society the appearance of a power which it does not possess, along with the substance of a responsibility, which, in the judgment of your committee, the people of Delaware will generally believe to attach to the society so long as it continues its corporate existence."

There is much truth and force in the following observations:

"Your committee do not regard them [the acts of 1839 and 1843] as surprising, since they are in conformity with the spirit of the age, of which a leading characteristic is a great reverence for education, in theory and profession, coupled with a real practical disregard of its highest interests and advantages. In fact, it is an age in which ignorance enters into direct competition with learning and wisdom; and its rapacious eagerness to achieve the emoluments, if not the honours, of education, without the pains of acquisition, is encouraged by the facility with which the multitude allow its claim, and the readiness with which grave legislators remove, one after another, the legal barriers interposed by their fathers in the way of its unworthy ambition. This agrarian spirit—for agrarian it is—aims particularly at the learned professions. In at least one State of this Union, we have seen the practice of the law thrown open to all persons, without distinction, and the courts converted into arenas, in which men destitute of any legal knowledge may, if they think fit, contend with profound jurists. Medicine has suffered still more: in nearly every State, legal disabilities have been abolished; the most grossly incompetent persons are admitted to the performance of offices in which the responsibilities are of life and death; and there are not wanting numerous individuals, even among the intelligent classes, to whom such medical adventurers, and their

panaceal nostrums, are more acceptable than the counsels of the best educated physicians."

Under such circumstances, it is recommended to the society, to surrender its charter; and this course is a truly dignified and proper one. The members of this society seem determined to uphold the dignity and character of our noble profession; and they deserve and will receive the respect of all honourable men.

*Stearine.*—Common lard, in modern times, passes through such a variety of transformations in the hands of foreign and domestic manufacturers, that it is quite difficult to decide, always, whether we have a new article, with an old name, or an old acquaintance with a fresh one just coined from a Greek lexicon. It goes out to France in barrels, packed at Cincinnati, and comes back in Florence flasks, the purest of olive oil; or, returning from London, nicely labelled in China boxes, it is bear's grease, fresh from the ursa major regions of inhospitable Russia. In Boston it undergoes a variety of scientific squeezings; and when the press is unlocked, the purchaser may have almost any thing he calls for; viz., *stearine*, for frying cakes, or shortening for pies, deprived of all its oleaginous properties, which unnaturally fattened our forefathers, till they were sleek and slippery. Or, should he prefer spermaceti, there it is—cheaper than it can be extracted from whales. If spindles are to be oiled, or steamboats and locomotives are creaking from friction, nothing has been discovered equal to it for machinery. It is neither too hot nor too cold; is always soft, and yet sufficiently hard. It is fitted for all seasons, like the Irishman's mittens—which were warm and dry when they were wet and cold.

To be serious, however, *stearine* is announced to be infinitely superior, in culinary economy, to lard as it is ordinarily used. Is it so, or not? This is a question that can be answered better when consumers know more about it. From a slight opportunity for observation, we are justified in saying that *stearine* is a delicate article; and on account of being deprived of materials that had better be burned than taken into the stomach, it must be preferable to the unmanufactured animal fat. If there is nothing of importance in the looks of a thing, there may be in the taste; and it is certain that *stearine*

does not have that rancid flavour which is a common property of lard after having been packed a few months, unless extraordinary exertions are observed, in this variable climate, to keep it from atmospheric influences. —*Boston Med. & Surg. Jour.*

*Philadelphia Medical Classes.*—The number of students this year is unusually large. The class at the University of Pennsylvania exceeds four hundred, and that at Jefferson Medical College reaches nearly three hundred.

*Medical College of Ohio.*—It is stated in the *Western Lancet*, that the class in this school numbers one hundred and sixty-seven, and will probably reach one hundred and eighty.

*Harvard University, Boston.*—The medical class in this school, the present season, is, we learn, the largest that has ever assembled there. Nearly one hundred and forty have already entered, and the number will doubtless exceed this.

*Willoughby University of Lake Erie.*—This institution has been reorganized, with the following faculty.—Amasa Trowbridge, M. D., Prof. Surgery; James Quackenboss, M. D., Prof. Gen. and Special Anat. and Phys.; R. H. Paddock, M. D., Prof. Chem. Pharm. and Mat. Med.; John Butterfield, M. D., Prof. of Theory and Practice of Physic and Physical Signs of Disease; Hosmer Graham, M. D., Prof. Obstetrics and Diseases of Women and Children.

*Cleveland Medical College.*—A new medical school has recently been organized at Cleveland, Ohio.

*Cortland Medical and Surgical Association.*—The following officers have recently been elected:—A. B. Shipman, President; Lewis Riggs, Lewis H. Kelly, Vice Presidents; Ashbel Patterson, Recording Secretary; H. O. Jewett, Corresponding Secretary; H. Van Dusen, Wm. J. Willson, A. Cooke, J. A. Shipman, Joel R. Carpenter, ——— Chapman, Wm. H. Knapp, Curators.

*University of Maryland.*—Dr. R. S. Stuart has resigned his chair of Theory and Practice of Medicine.

## FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

*Action of Gastric Juice on Calculi.*—M. MILLOT, a student of medicine, addressed recently (October 9) a letter to the French Academy of Sciences, announcing his discovery of the gastric juice being a solvent for calculi in the bladder.

M. M. is rather late in his announcement. It has been long known that the gastric liquor had the power of dissolving certain kinds of urinary calculi out of the body; and the late Professor DORSEY, of Philadelphia, in his inaugural thesis published in 1802, detailed some experiments which prove that this fluid may be safely injected into the bladder, and that portions of calculus are evacuated after such operations. It operates so slowly, however, that it is probable that the accretion progresses almost as fast as the solution, so that little is gained.

*Extirpation of Ovaria.*—Mr. WALNE has published, in the *London Medical Gazette*, for October, a report of the third case in which he has successfully extirpated a diseased ovary by the large section. The tumour weighed twenty-eight pounds.

In the *Medical Times*, for October 7, Mr. CLAY gives an account of his seventh case of peritoneal section for removal of diseased ovary. The tumour weighed twenty-nine pounds fourteen ounces. The patient recovered.

*Association of Medical Officers of Hospitals for the Insane.*—This is the title of an association, formed in England in 1841, and which consists of the medical officers of public insane hospitals of Great Britain as ordinary members, and of such medical gentlemen having the private care of the insane; of such persons not medical, known to take an interest in those afflicted with insanity; and of such distinguished foreigners, as the society shall at any time think proper to elect, as honorary members.

The intentions and objects with which the association set out were—

1. "To improve the management of lunatic asylums."
2. "To improve the management of the insane."
3. "To acquire a more extensive and a more correct knowledge of insanity."

To effect these objects, the members of the Association meet, annually, at some town

or place in which there is a public lunatic asylum. They solicit the permission of the governors or visitors to visit the asylum, and to inspect it thoroughly, and afterwards to assemble in the committee-room of the asylum, to speak freely, openly, and in good faith, upon the merits or defects they may have observed in the management of the asylum or in the treatment of the patients. On the same occasion, such members as think proper read essays or papers on subjects connected with insanity; and all communicate and compare their respective experience. At these meetings, the governors or visitors are respectfully requested to attend.

The more effectually to compare their respective experience, the Association has adopted a register for the use of its members, whereby the leading features in the history and character of every case, placed under the care of each member, may be uniformly recorded. By this a great mass of similar facts will be simultaneously collected in all parts of the kingdom, and at the same time so arranged as to show a record of insanity, not as presented to one lunatic asylum, but as occurring throughout the kingdom.

The Association is collecting plans of all the asylums at present erected, and copies of such designs as from time to time may be projected. It collects also the printed reports and other published documents of different asylums.—*London Med. Gaz.*

*Strangulation by the Umbilical Cord.*—Dr. EICKHORN was called juridically to examine the body of a full grown male child, the offspring of parents in easy circumstances, which had died almost as soon as it was born, after making two or three incomplete attempts at respiration, in spite of the efforts of the midwife to recall it to life. The umbilical cord was twisted three times round the child's neck, and thence resulted a mark of strangulation two lines wide and one deep. Had this child been born clandestinely, and had died under these circumstances, every medical jurist would have declared it had been alive, and was destroyed by external violence. The case is therefore worthy of notice.—*Med. Times.*

*Modification of the Hydrostatic Bed.*—Dr. OGDEN, of Sunderland, has used a kind of hydrostatic bed, which he thus describes:—a bed frame is prepared, with feet, sides, and ends, similar to those of ordinary beds.



At three or four inches within the side-bars two others are placed parallel to them, leaving in the centre an open space, at least, of two feet broad. A sheet of strong canvass is stretched over the whole, and laced with a cord to the ends and external lateral bars, sufficiently slack to allow the part between the two internal bars to be depressed nine inches in the centre, and only two or three inches at each end. In the cavity of this depression is placed a sack of water-tight Macintosh cloth, large enough to allow the introduction of twenty or thirty gallons of water, without producing any tension; it must remain perfectly flaccid. The neck is brought through the foot-board of the bed to the outside, where water is introduced, sufficient being employed to fill the sack to within half or three-fourths of an inch of the level of the bed-frame. The apparatus then presents the appearance of a nearly level surface, consisting of two lateral planes, rigid and tense, and one central plane of the greatest possible softness. A thin mattress from one to two inches thick, is laid upon this, and then the bedclothes are put on, when the bed is ready for use. The advantages of this apparatus Dr. Ogden considers to be, greater facility of ventilation, superior portability, a smaller quantity of water being required, and less expense. There is not any necessity to close the orifice by which water is admitted; it requires simply to be turned upwards and supported with a loose string, to prevent the water from flowing out by the movements of the patient. The water can be discharged from the sack, when requisite, by means of a syphon.—*Lond. Med. Gaz.*, Aug., 1843.

*College of Surgeons.—New Charter.*—The Royal College of Surgeons, in London, have recently had a new charter granted to them, with the title of the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

*Fracture simultaneous with Cancer.*—A sempstress admitted into one of the wards of Mr. CHASSAIGNAC, at La Charité, for a spontaneous fracture of the humerus, after having been operated upon twice for cancer of the breast, he thereupon mentioned the following two curious cases: 1st. A nucleus of an encephaloid nature, which began in the diplôe, and made its way, in some parts through the internal, and in others, through

the external table of the skull. The woman was affected with cancer of the breast, and broke both femurs during a slight effort. 2d. A female patient, labouring under an encephaloid cancer of the stomach, broke an arm in the movement she made to take her pot of tisane.—*Med. Times.*

*Intermittent Hæmorrhage.*—Dr. BRADSHAW related to the Reading Pathological Society, (Feb. 14, 1843,) the case of a lady who, for seven years past, had in every February been affected with hæmorrhage from the uterus, accompanied by a tertian ague, in whom, by treating the fever in the ordinary way, the hæmorrhage subsides.—*Prov. Med. Jour.*, Sept. 9, 1843.

*Longevity in Russia.*—It is stated in a St. Petersburg Journal, that there died in Russia during the year 1840, 469 persons over 100 years of age; of whom 236 had attained the age of 105, 108 had turned 110, 59 reached 115, 45 were 120, 25 were 125, 4 were 130, and 2 were 145.

*Sir Charles Bell.*—It is stated in the English papers, that this eminent physiologist died in a state of poverty, and that his widow has been lately placed on the pension list by Sir R. Peel, to the amount of 100*l*.

*Caries of the Acromion Process.*—Mr. FERGUSSON, of King's College, London, recently removed the entire acromion process of the left scapula, for caries. The gouge and cutting pliers were the instruments used. The patient did well.—*Med. Times.*

*Insane Poor in Ireland.*—The government is about to build four large hospitals for the insane poor in Ireland. They are to be on a very large scale.—*Med. Times.*

*Moxson's Magnesian Aperient.*—The following formula for this article is given in the Pharmaceutical Journal for October. R. Magnes. Sulph., Sodæ Carb.  $\bar{a} \bar{a}$   $\bar{H}j$ . Acid. Tart.  $\bar{H}ss$ . M. The ingredients to be separately and well dried.

*Electrical Apparatus for Medical Purposes.*—An apparatus of this kind, devised by MM. Breton, brothers, Paris, is spoken of in *La Lancette Francaise*, in the highest terms of approbation.

# INDEX.

## A

Addison County Medical Society, 77.  
Albany Medical College, 65.  
Animal Magnetism, 99, 117.  
Aorta, ligature of, 47.  
Arago, influence of eclipses on animals, 48.  
Arsenic detected in the liver, 79.  
Arsenical caustic for ulcers, 119.  
Asphyxia from drowning, relieved by warm ashes, 95.  
Astragalus, extirpation of, 88.  
Atlee, extirpation of ovaria, 93.  
Austrian Police, 88.

## B

Baltimore College of Dental Surgery, 87.  
Barry, spermatozoa within mammiiferous ovum, 47.  
Bell, Sir Charles, 129.  
Bennett, black tongue, 102.  
Berkshire Medical Institution, 16.  
Berzelius, accident to, 48.  
Bischoff, separation and fœcundation of ovum, 120.  
Black tongue, 102.  
Bouvier, myotomy in spinal deformities, 31.  
Bradshaw, intermittent hæmorrhage, 129.  
British Provincial Medical Schools, 26.  
British Association for advancement of science, 112.  
Brodie's lectures on diseases of the urinary organs, 47.  
Brunel, half sovereign in trachea, 95.  
Bugs voided from bowels, 56.

## C

Calculi, action of gastric juice on, 127.  
Cancer, influenced by civilization, 79.  
Capillary circulation, agents affecting, 87.  
Carbon and Nitrogen, compound bodies, 111.  
Caries of aeromion process, 129.  
Castleton Medical College, 15, 87.  
Cataract, pretended cure of, by prussic acid, 46.  
Champooing, 63.  
Chausarel, tannin an antidote to poisonous mushrooms, 79.  
Charity Hospital, New Orleans, 56.  
Charriere, gilding surgical instruments, 59.  
Children, poisoning of by Godfrey's cordial, 77.  
Children, ward for, in Guy's hospital, 120.  
Christison, detected arsenic in liver, 79.  
Churchyard beetles discharged per anum, 68.  
Clay's paper on extirpation of ovaria, 119.  
Clerical encouragement of quackery, 85.

Cleveland Medical College, 127.  
Clinical lectures, Gerhard, S, 41.  
——— Tyrrel, 69.  
——— Watson, 50.  
Coates, influence of solitary confinement on coloured persons, 77.  
Columbian College, 110.  
Colchester, prophet of, 64.  
Common iliac artery, ligature of, 46.  
Connecticut Retreat for the insane, 77.  
Consciousness, normal and abnormal, 67.  
Consumption, curability of, 29.  
———, steam cure for, 29.  
Cormack, churchyard beetles discharged per anum, 68.  
Cortland Medical and Surgical Association, 127.  
Cyanosis, 93.

## D

Dead, reviving of, 92.  
Death, signs of, 96.  
Delaware, Medical Society of, 125.  
Dental Surgery, Baltimore College of, 87.  
Diet at the House of Correction, Boston, 93.  
Discharges, signs of death, 96.  
Dumas, hydrogen a metal, 48.

## E

Eastern Penitentiary, Physician to, 47.  
Eclipses, influence on animals, 48.  
Ecke, accidental introduction of glass in the body, 58.  
Education, free trade, 10.  
Edwards, revivification of microscopic animals, 67.  
Eickhorn, strangulation by umbilical cord, 128.  
Eitner, larvæ of musca vomitoria in eye, 80.  
Elliotson, mesmeric amputation, 57.  
English general practitioner, 92.  
Epidemic fever, 66.

## F

Fracture simultaneous with cancer, 129.  
France, treatment of medical swindlers in, 53.  
French Hospitals, 30.  
——— Royal Academy of Medicine, 48.  
——— Sciences, 68, 79.  
Friends' Asylum for the insane, 65.  
Fourcault, disease of workmen, 88.

## G

Geneva Medical School, 16, 45.  
Georgia, Medical College of, 103.

Gerhard, clinical lecture on diagnosis between organic and functional diseases of the heart, 3.

——, physical signs of diseases of the heart, 41.

Gilding surgical instruments, 59.

Glass, accidental introduction into the body, 58.

Gluteal aneurism, 103.

Godfrey's cordial, poisoning of children by in England, 77.

Goslin, letter from, 117, 124.

Graduates, 56.

Grilli, great number of worms voided by a child, 68.

Gruby, worms in blood of a dog, 79.

## H

Hæmorrhage, intermittent, 129.

Hæmostatic fluids, 59.

Hahnemann, forestalled by Shakspeare, 62.

——, death of, 104.

Hampden Sidney College, Medical department of, 87, 110.

Harvard University, 110, 127.

Heart, diagnosis between functional and organic diseases of, 3.

——, physical signs of diseases of, 41.

Hoax, 30.

Homœopathic fictions, 13.

Homœopathy, pronounced quackery, 65.

Homœopathy, victims to, 46, 86.

Homœopathy described by Ben Jonson, 63.

Homœopathy, Black's treatise on, review of, 74.

Horner, communication between pulmonary air vesicles and pulmonary veins, 46.

Hope, Prof. rumoured resignation, 68.

Hospital ship, 30.

Huart, animal magnetism, 99.

Hydrogen, a metal, 48.

Hydrophathy, 54.

Hydrostatic bed, modification of, 128.

## I

Idiocy, successful treatment of, 48.

Illegitimate births, 88.

Infantile mortality, 88.

Infusoria in tartar of teeth, 112.

Influenza, 86, 93.

Insane Hospital, Association of Medical officers of, 128.

Insane, Friends' Asylum for, 65.

——, Connecticut Retreat for, 77.

——, Mount St. Vincent's Hospital, 118.

——, Poor of Ireland, Hospital for, 129.

——, Vermont Asylum for, 118.

——, Western Asylum, Virginia, for, 65.

Insanity, plea of, in criminal cases, 80.

## J

Jacksonian prize, Royal College of Surgeons, 32.

Jujube paste, decision in regard to, 56.

## K

Katona, inoculation for measles, 47.

Kemper College, 103.

Killian, bugs voided from bowels, 56.

## L

Larvæ of *Musca vomitoria* in eye, 80.

Lecanu, case tapped 866 times, 79.

Le Normand, death of, 104.

Legare, death of, 93.

Lejonecourt, instances of longevity, 103.

Lee, nervous structure of uterus, 79.

Leeches, how to make them bite, 103.

Leeches, preservation of, 47.

Lithotrity, 30.

London Hospitals, changes in, 96.

London Medical Society, 120.

Longevity, instances of, 103.

—— in Russia, 129.

Louis, appointment of, 48.

Lunatics and idiots in New Jersey, 56.

## M

Macartney, death of, 68.

Mandl, infusoria in tartar of teeth, 112.

Mantaccini, 92.

Maryland, University of, 65, 127.

Massachusetts General Hospital, Reports of cases, 7.

Matteucci, experiments on torpedo, 94.

Mazier, asphyxia, 95.

Measles, inoculation for, 47.

Medical Deputies, 30.

Medical education, gratuitous, 44.

Medical liberality, 48, 56, 65.

Medical reform, 111.

Medical Schools, new, 65.

Medical swindlers, treatment of, in France, 53.

Mesmeric amputation, 57.

Microscopic animalcules, revivification of, 67.

Milk, adulteration of, 16.

Milliners, condition of the London, 66.

Mitchell, introductory lecture, 43.

Monteiro, ligature of aorta, 47.

Mount St. Vincent's Hospital, 118.

Moxson's magnesian aperient, 129.

Mrs. Mapp, 108.

Mulatto, a hybrid, 93.

Mushrooms, tannin an antidote to poisonous, 79.

Myotomy in spinal deformities, 31.

## N

Naphtha, a cure for consumption, 122.

Navy, Medical profession in, 82, 89, 105, 115.

New Haven Medical Association, 26.

New Jersey, lunatics and idiots in, 56.

New York City Hospital, 16.

New York Medical Society, 66.

—— Students, 77.

—— Medical classes, 15.

—— Medical and Surgical Society, 45.

New York, paupers in, 30.

New works, 87.

Nott, Mulatto a hybrid, 93.

## O

Ogden's modification of hydrostatic bed, 128.

Ogmundsen, silver teaspoon swallowed, 47.

Ohio, Medical College of, 127.

Ollenroth, ovarian dropsy, 103.

Ophthalmic institutions of England, 28.



Ovaria, extirpation of, 93, 119, 128.

—, dropsy of, 103.

Ovum of mammalia, separation and fecundation of, 120.

Owen, pension to, 16.

### P

Paris, statistics of medical profession, 59.

Pathological Society of Philadelphia, 14.

Payer, turning of plants towards light, 88.

Peace, ligature of common iliac artery, 46.

Pellagra in France, 112.

Pennsylvania Hospital, account of, 8.

—, reports, 25, 42, 49, 81, 97, 113, 121.

—, clinical instruction in, 56.

Pennsylvania Medical College, 110.

Pereira, potato starch, 110.

Philadelphia Hospital, Blockley, 29, 65.

—, paupers in, 30.

Philadelphia Medical Society, 31, 44.

Philadelphia Medical Institution, 109.

Philadelphia Medical Classes, 15, 127.

Phlebitis, suppurative, 50.

Phthisis pulmonalis, 111.

Phthisis and intermittent fever, balance of prevalence between, 103, 119.

Plagiarism extraordinary, 47.

Pierard, placental pregnancy, 94.

Placental pregnancy, 94.

Plants, turning of towards light, 88.

Poissonville, agents affecting capillary circulation, 87.

Population getting shorter, 31.

Position defined, 119.

Potato starch, 110.

Pregnancy erroneously suspected, 109.

Prize essays, 59.

Precocity, 56.

Provincial Medical Schools, 26.

Prussic acid, pretended cure of cataract by, 46.

Prussic acid in diseases of the eye, 12.

Puffing, medical, 64.

Pulmonary air vesicles and pulmonary veins, communication between, 46.

Pupil, adherent, separated by galvanism, 65.

### Q

Quackery, free trade in, 10.

—, clerical encouragement of, 85.

—, sketches of, 12, 28, 45, 52, 61, 74, 84, 92, 124.

—, suppression of, 79, 86.

Quack advertisements, 86, 109.

Queen's Hospital, Birmingham, 16.

### R

Raising the wind, 29.

Rognetta, extirpation of astragalus, 88.

Rigg, carbon and nitrogen compound bodies, 111.

Rose, position defined, 119.

Root Doctors and their practice, 76.

### S

Salivation, treatment of, 67.

Secret remedies in France, 29.

Seguin, successful treatment of idiocy, 41.

Silver teaspoon swallowed, 47.

Solitary confinement, influence of, on colored persons, 77.

Souberbeille, arsenical caustic in uterus, 112.

South Carolina, Medical College of, 77.

Spermatozoa within mammiferous ovum, 47, 79.

Sprague, erroneously suspected pregnancy, 109.

Squinting, 13.

Stammering, death from operation for, 30.

Starvation, voluntary, 59.

Stearine, 127.

Surgeons, new charter of Royal College of, 129.

Surgeon's instruments, gilding of, 39.

Sweating sickness, 47.

Syncope, 68.

### T

Tannin, antidote to poisonous mushrooms, 79.

Tapped 866 times, 79.

Tartar of the teeth, 111.

Tenotomy, 68.

Thomsonian practitioner convicted, 102.

Thomson, death of, 120.

Torpedo, experiments on, 94.

Trachea, half sovereign in, 95.

Transylvania University, 30.

Turnbull's discoveries, 12.

Tyrrell, clinical lecture, 69.

—, death of, 88.

### U

Umbilical cord, strangulation by, 128.

University College Hospital, 48.

Urinary concretions, solution of, 16.

Uterus, nervous structure of, 79.

### V

Varices, pathology and treatment of, 29.

Velpeau, itinerant operators for squinting, 13.

Vermont Asylum for insane, 118.

### W

Water cure, 101.

Watson, clinical lecture on suppurative phlebitis, 50.

Westmoreland County Medical Society, 15.

Willoughby University of Lake Erie, 127.

Wills Hospital, reports, 7, 26, 61, 89, 115, 121.

Wilde, illegitimate births, 88.

—, infantile mortality, 88.

—, Austrian police, 88.

Worms, great number voided by a child, 68.

—, in blood of a dog, 79.

Workmen, diseases of, 88.

### Y

Yale College, 110.

Yellow fever, 110.

